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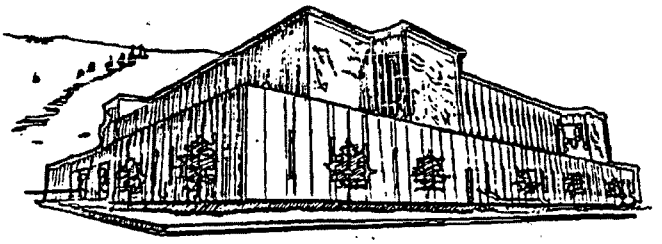

PUTTING COMMUNITY INTO THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: COMMUNITY MEETINGS AS METHOD -- TROY TOWN MEETING AS TEST

By

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Community development efforts generally, and by simple definition, are aimed toward the development of the community. In 1980, local leaders in Troy, Montana sought to "develop" their community by building a city sewer system and sewage treatment plant. In the process, they learned a key lesson about the importance of involving local citizens in the community development process.

Troy is a city of approximately 1,000 residents located in the extreme northwestern corner of Montana. The city has its own high school and elementary school, one supermarket, and various other businesses and services. The primary sources of income for local residents are mining and forestry. The city government is comprised of a four-member city council, a mayor, and a full-time city clerk who is hired by the council and mayor.

The city of Troy does not have a sewer system. All residences, businesses, and public buildings rely upon individual septic systems for waste disposal. Local leaders have been concerned for many years about the potential negative impacts of the septic systems. Examples of such impacts include: health and sanitation problems; pollution of underground water supplies, the Kootenai River, and other local water sources; and hampered economic development. Additionally, local leaders and some members of the community perceive a threat of state or federal sanctions

against the city for its failure to build and operate public sewer facilities.

In 1981, the Troy City Council obtained full funding, in the form of grants from state and federal sources, for the construction of a sewer system and sewage treatment plant. The sewer proposal called for local citizens to pay a hook-up fee of approximately $400 (in payments spread out over time), and a $9 monthly service fee to maintain the system. A disgruntled engineer, who had been denied the contract to build the new sewer system, and other citizens opposed to the project, mounted a campaign against the proposal. They helped to convince the community that local leaders had not been "up front" with information about the hook-up fee and other aspects of the project. When the city council put the matter to a vote of the citizens, the sewer project was soundly rejected. A member of the city council literally had to hand back a signed $1 million check to state authorities.

Various accounts of Troy's failed effort to build a sewer system focus upon different individuals and groups as the "culprits" responsible for convincing local citizens to reject the project. In discussing the matter, state officials, local leaders in Troy, and other Troy citizens are consistent in the view that the citizens opposed the sewer system because they believed that the local leaders had not provided them with full information about the

project. Specifically, a lack of information regarding the potential hook-up fee was instrumental in many citizens' decisions to vote against the proposed sewer system. No one makes the claim that the citizens opposed the project because they did not perceive a need for a city-wide sewer system. It is valid to suggest, then, that had the citizens been more involved in discussions and decisions about the project, it is likely that they would have voted in favor of the sewer system.

The firm rejection of the sewer project by Troy citizens in 1981 was consistent with the behavior of voters around the country at that time. The passage of California's Proposition 13 in 1978 set off a "... string of property tax rebellions across the country."[1] By 1980, citizens in 38 states had approved various measures to reduce or stabilize taxes.[2] While government officials scrambled for ways to provide services under "severe revenue constraints," academicians struggled to explain what had come to be known as the "tax revolt."[3]

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[1]Clark Norton, "Taxation Hesitation," Mother Jones, April 1989, 42.

[2]David Lowery and Lee Sigelman, "Understanding the Tax Revolt: Eight Explanations," The American Political Science Review 75 (December, 1981): 963.

[3]Ibid.

Between 1978 and 1980, over 100 articles were written in response to the tax revolt.[4] In 1981, David Lowery and Lee Sigelman analyzed voter data to test the validity of the eight most commonly offered explanations of voters' anti-tax sentiments. They identified the eight explanations as: 1) self-interest; 2) tax level; 3) tax efficiency; 4) tax distribution; 5) economic pinch; 6) political ideology; 7) political disaffection; and 8) information.[5] A list of predictors was developed, and the predictors were grouped according to the particular explanation to which each was related. For example, within the self-interest explanation were predictors such as race, age, and income. Attached to the political disaffection explanation were predictors such as trust in the political system and responsiveness of government. A total of 25 predictors were used in the analysis.

For their study, Lowery and Sigelman utilized data on California voters who supported Proposition 13 which had been gathered by the University of Michigan Center for Political Studies for the 1978 National Election Study. They measured the correlation between the various predictors and voters' support of Proposition 13 in order to determine which of the eight explanations were most accurate. Out of the 25 predictors, only one emerged as a reliable factor in

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[4]Ibid.

[5]Ibid, 964-966.

an individual's support of Proposition 13. The predictor was labelled "outefficacy," and was described by the authors as, "... the feeling that one is cut-off from the decision-making process."[6] Only this single predictor, related to only one of eight explanations, stood out as a valid indication why the public would support an anti-tax ballot measure.

Lowery and Sigelman concluded their study by explaining that the lack of correlation between the other 24 predictors and voters' support of Proposition 13 indicated that the public, in voting for the ballot measure, was reacting to broad concerns rather than specific issues. This type of public response is referred to by the authors as "symbolic politics."[7] The behavior of Proposition 13 advocate Howard Jarvis epitomized this approach. His campaign for the passage of Proposition 13 rarely focused upon details of the measure, and instead directed the public's attention and wrath upon "lazy bureaucrats" and "lying politicians."[8]

What the citizens of Troy and the supporters of Proposition 13 had in common was not necessarily any strong objection to a specific issue, but rather a need to let their respective governments know that they were tired of being left out of the public decision-making process.

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[6]Ibid, 966.

[7]Ibid, 972.

[8]Ibid.

If local leaders and government officials think that such public sentiment has subsided, a 1990 article by Iris McQueen proves them wrong. In that article, she documents the steadily increasing use of ballot initiatives by citizens across the country, "... not only for fiscal reform, but to create public policy in the areas of environment, gambling, and land use."[9] These efforts, according to McQueen, reflect a strong public dissatisfaction with the way government is doing things. She quotes Jim Calabrigo, a former city planning manager for a California community, who sums up the situation by saying, "In the Bay Area, we have seen several communities that have become separated from their public and faced a tumult of initiatives. Decision-makers have failed to get or heed public input. The failure to consider them and keep them involved from beginning to end has led to a growing distrust and disrespect for people in public office."[10] McQueen concludes that the initiative process, "... has given citizens an outlet for their outrage and a voice to which officials must listen."[11]

Clearly, citizens who believe that they have been left out of the public decision-making process have found, and

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[9]Iris McQueen, "Taxpayer Revolts," American City and County, November 1990, 24.

[10]Ibid.

[11]Ibid, 26.

continue to find, ways to "fight back" against governments and leaders that fail to involve them in that process. Whether they are members of a community who say "no" to a new sewer system, or a statewide population that forces a tax freeze, these citizens must be given a legitimate voice in public decision-making if government is to have their support. The purpose of this paper is to present community meetings as a means of involving citizens in public decision-making and increasing their trust in, and support of, government.

The information presented here is directed specifically toward local leaders, public administrators, and consultants who are striving to involve community members in the community development process. Citizen participation through community meetings is discussed within the context of community development for two reasons. First, such an approach is most practical in that it is based upon particular examples of ways in which citizens can be involved in an identified level of government (i.e. local) that is responsible for carrying out specific duties (i.e. community development). Secondly, when discussed as a part of the community development process, community meetings can be recognized as an important tool for enhancing the community's overall well-being while also building public support for local government.

Chapter two of this paper begins with an overview of the community development process, defining the term "community development" and describing the different objectives of, and approaches to, the process. That information will serve as the foundation for a discussion of the reasons why the community is often excluded from the community development process, and lead to the suggestion that as the objectives of community development vary, so will the level of citizen participation in those efforts. While attempts to facilitate broad citizen participation may not be suited to community development projects focused on very specific issues or concerns, the chapter concludes with the argument that a high level of citizen participation is essential to the overall development of the community, and in turn, in building public support for more narrowly focused community development projects. Material presented in chapter two clarifies that community meetings, as discussed in the remainder of the paper, are presented as a part of the larger process of the development of the community as a whole.

Chapter three gives details regarding the way in which such meetings fit into the community development process and information regarding the various components of community meetings. Chapter four provides an account of a community meeting conducted in Troy, Montana, and establishes an important link between the process of community development,

community meetings as a way of generating public participation in that process, and one particular city's efforts to involve local residents in the development of their community.

A brief conclusion identifies the specific results that can be achieved by using community meetings to facilitate public participation in the community development process. The "costs" of increased citizen participation are also considered, and a final argument is presented regarding the value of community meetings as a part of the community development process.

CHAPTER II
UNDERSTANDING COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

In order to consider reasons and methods for involving community members in the community development process, it is first necessary to define the term "community development." The presentation of this definition will show that the involvement of community members is inherent to community development, and leads to a consideration of the different types of community development. This material provides the groundwork for a discussion of the way in which the different objectives of, and approaches to, community development can lead to the exclusion of citizens from that process. It is critical, therefore, to recognize the value of community development efforts which focus upon the involvement of community members and have as their objectives the overall development of the community.

Community Development Defined

Although the term "community development" enjoys frequent and common use, there is no standard, widely accepted definition. In reviewing various definitions, however, three common themes do emerge. The first is an emphasis on change and improvement within the community. The second is the role of the community itself in identifying concerns, needs, and specific goals for such change or improvement. Finally, most definitions of community development reference the planning and

implementation of specified goals or a community development plan as a part of the process.

Arthur Wileden, who wrote a textbook on community development in 1970 while serving as a professor of rural sociology at the University of Wisconsin, offers a definition of community development which encompasses these themes:

> ... it is the process by which people within an area, which they choose to think of as a community, analyze a situation, determine the community's needs and unfulfilled opportunities, decide what can and should be done to improve the situation, and then move in the direction of achievement of agreed upon goals and objectives.[12]

In offering this definition, Wileden emphasizes that community development cannot occur until there is community action, and that such action is the responsibility of the community and not an outside professional worker.[13] His definition clearly emphasizes the role of citizens' in the community development process.

In balancing his own view of community development, Wileden provides a 1956 United Nations definition of community development, which states that it is the process by which:

> ... the efforts of the people themselves are united with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social, and cultural conditions of

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[12]Arthur F. Wileden, Community Development: The Dynamics of Planned Change (Totowa, New Jersey: The Bedminster Press, 1970), 80.

[13]Ibid.

> communities to integrate these communities into the life of the nation, and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress.[14]

It is not surprising that the United Nations' definition stresses the relationship between the people and governmental authorities, the economic aspect of community development, and the importance of integrating communities into national life and enabling their contribution to "national progress." Despite its identification of these particular aspects of community development, however, the United Nations' definition is still premised upon the involvement, or more specifically, the "efforts," of the people themselves in the community development process.

The emphasis of any particular community development project will surely reflect the interests and concerns of those organizing the effort. As Wileden's definition shows, however, true community development incorporates change and improvement based upon the input and needs of citizens. The basic themes and elements of community development having been established, then, it is useful to consider how the process works by examining the different types of community development efforts.

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[14]United Nations Economic and Social Council, Twentieth Report of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, 18 October 1956, Annex III, Document E/2931 as cited by Arthur Wileden, Community Development: The Dynamics of Planned Change (Totowa, New Jersey: The Bedminster Press, 1970), 81.

Different Types of Community Development

Community development efforts are as unique and individual as communities themselves. However, most types of community development can be analyzed from two perspectives. One perspective focuses upon the objectives of community development efforts, and emphasizes the various kinds of benefits and outcomes local people can derive from those efforts. A second perspective focuses upon the different approaches that can be taken to implement community development efforts, and identifies the participants central to each approach.

The Objectives of Community Development. Recently, local economic development efforts have been the highlight of many community development projects. Economic development emphasizes the creation of local jobs and increasing the incomes of local residents.[15] Re-writing zoning laws, building local infrastructure, or improving social services are other examples of specific community development projects. Rural sociologist Gene Summers describes these kinds of projects as development in the community. This type of community development, according to Summers, treats community as, "... a territorial setting where social processes take place."[16] These "social

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[15]Gene F. Summers, "Rural Community Development," Annual Review of Sociology 12 (1986): 356.

[16]Ibid.

processes," or rather, specific community development efforts, may certainly benefit some of the local residents or the standing of the community as a whole. The distinguishing aspect of this type of community development, however, is that the object of the development is typically a narrowly defined and specific element of the community.

Other community development projects may have as their focus the development of the community. Here the objective is to improve the community overall. Such efforts are based upon the view that the community itself is a significant factor in the social, political, and economic well-being of the residents of a locality, and that attention must be paid to developing the entire community.[17] Summers utilizes the work of K.P Wilkinson and Emile Durkheim to explain why the development of the community is critical, and represents in itself a valid objective for community development efforts.

Wilkinson maintains that the community is the setting for one's contact with society, and is an individual's primary realm of social experience beyond the family. Therefore, if the community provides the appropriate social conditions, it is instrumental in fostering personal growth and individual self-actualization. He concludes that community development is a purposive activity by people to

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[17]Ibid, 354.

strengthen their respective communities and thus improve their own lives.[18]

Well-developed communities are also considered to be critical to one's survival in mass society. To support this claim, Summers presents the work of sociologist Emile Durkheim, who viewed community as an intermediate structure existing between the individual and the state or larger society. According to Durkheim, community as an intermediate structure serves to bridge the gap between the state, or mass society, and the individual. By developing or enhancing that "bridge," community development can play an integral role in the individual's ability to establish a sense of identity and connection with others, and avoid the alienation and loneliness common to mass society in the modern world.[19]

It is often difficult to separate development in the community from development of the community, as the first may often lead to the second. It is useful to recognize, however, that community development efforts may center around two very distinct kinds of objectives. How those

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[18]K.P. Wilkinson, "Social Well-Being and Community," Journal of the Community Development Society 10, no. 1 (1979): 5-16, as cited by Gene F. Summers, "Rural Community Development," Annual Review of Sociology 12 (1986): 355.

[19]Emile Durkheim, Division of Labor in Society, trans. G. Simpson (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1964) as cited by Gene F. Summers, Rural Community Development," Annual Review of Sociology 12 (1986): 355.

efforts are applied can be considered by examining the different approaches to community development.

Approaches to Community Development. In his 1986 work on rural community development, Summers describes community development as, "... planned intervention to stimulate social change."[20] Just as the objectives for such intervention vary, so do the approaches for its implementation.

Authoritative intervention implies the involvement of an agent or expert in the community development process. Working on behalf of local leaders, the agent introduces an idea or plan for change within the community. The plan is typically based upon scientific research or other specialized information, and assumes that the members of the community will act in their own "rational self-interest" and cooperate accordingly. This approach to community development presumes the existence of a provider-recipient relationship.[21]

Critics of authoritative intervention argue that it prohibits local people from deciding for themselves what kind of change is needed within their community. These critics, says Summers, believe that most people want, and should be able, to control their own lives.[22]

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[20]Summers, 360.

[21]Ibid, 362.

[22]Ibid, 363.

A second approach to community development is client-centered intervention. It is premised upon the idea that all people actively search for ways to satisfy their needs, and that they are capable of learning from their experiences and adjusting their lives and communities appropriately. This approach to community development relies upon political equality and popular sovereignty as tools for ensuring citizens an opportunity to participate in the community development process. Citizens themselves define problems, identify possible solutions, and plan for action. Summers explains that this approach to community development relies upon both indigenous and scientific knowledge.[23]

Why the Community is Left Out of Community Development

If, as the definition of community development indicates, citizen participation is a key aspect of the process, it is curious that the public is often left out of community development efforts. Nonetheless, the fact that such an odd situation does indeed exist is well supported by the behavior of citizens described in Chapter I. One way of understanding why citizens are not more involved in community development projects is to consider the specific objectives of, and approaches to, many such projects.

Community development efforts often focus upon the solution of a particular problem or the pursuit of a

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[23]Ibid, 364.

specific goal. For example, in Troy, the community sought to develop a city-wide sewer system. In Missoula, some citizens want a local ice skating rink and baseball stadium built. In another community, a group of citizens might want a stop sign placed at the end of their block. Each of these projects emphasizes narrowly focused development in the community.

The implementation of these kinds of community development efforts is often under the direction of an expert or authority who has expertise or information specific to the respective project. A civil engineer will design the sewer system. The local traffic safety officer will conduct a study and determine how great the need is for a new stop sign. The public may certainly play a role in identifying which issues constitute community priorities, or in casting a vote approving or disapproving a particular project. However, broad-based citizen participation in specific decisions regarding such community development projects (i.e. what kind of grants or loans are sought to pay for the sewer system or where the stop sign should be located) is actually quite limited. One reason for this is that many of the details and decisions regarding narrowly focused community development efforts are placed in the hands of the appropriate expert. A lack of citizen participation in this kind of community development is also due to that fact that on any given issue, only a certain

number of citizens will be concerned enough about it to show up for meetings or hearings pertaining to that matter. Consequently, such community development projects are often "captured" by special interests or a small group of concerned individuals. They are narrowly focused upon development in the community, have an authoritative approach, and are based upon limited citizen input.

The dilemma of this kind of community development is that the lack of citizen participation, which is inherent to it, is also the reason why many community members may ultimately oppose the effort. If few citizens have an opportunity to help decide how the sewer system will be paid for or where the new stop sign should be located, it is understandable that they would be hesitant to give their support to the project. There is an ironic twist to this dilemma, however, in that greater citizen participation in narrowly focused community development efforts can also be a hindrance. As more groups and individuals get involved in a specific project, a greater variety of concerns and conflicting needs will arise. In order to accomplish a goal or resolve a problem, however, the community development process must move ahead at the risk of alienating or angering various citizens or special interests. A double jeopardy therefore exists between the need for citizen participation in order to generate public support, and the

challenge of balancing numerous competing interests while still trying to get things done.

Why and How Community Belongs in Community Development

The fact that greater citizen participation makes specific community development efforts more complicated and difficult to accomplish does not excuse leaders and government officials from facilitating such participation. In fact, information presented in Chapter I clearly shows the price governments pay when they do not allow for citizen involvement in public decision-making. Therefore, one very practical reason why the community belongs in community development is so that leaders and government can gain the public's trust and support. Additionally, true community development, as defined earlier, is based upon the input and needs of the community members themselves. This kind of community development also tends to be more effective in the overall development of the community.

The challenge, then, is to legitimately involve citizens in the community development process in a way that allows for constructive citizen input and the exchange of information among citizens and between the public and the government. However, if citizen participation is facilitated only as a part of narrowly focused efforts toward development in the community, it typically serves little purpose other than to satisfy a public hearing

requirement or further divide individuals with differing views regarding the matter at hand. Another way to encourage constructive citizen participation in community development projects is to designate the overall development of the community as the objective of the project, and to make citizen participation a key aspect of that effort.

Development of the community requires a commitment to improving the community as a whole. The benefits of such efforts are directed toward all community members and not to a certain group of individuals or special interests. As Wilkinson's and Durkheim's arguments show, a healthy, supportive, and stable community provides important benefits to all.

Community development efforts that seek the overall improvement of the community will center around the community members, and provide them with opportunities to come together to share ideas and concerns, and plan for their community's future. The emphasis of these efforts is broad-based and not issue-specific. If the focus of this kind of community development is kept wide, citizens can contribute to the effort without having to immediately take a defensive position on a certain issue.

It is important to recognize that citizen participation is not a "cure all." In some instances, greater public involvement in community development efforts can result in more conflict and slowed progress. The argument that

citizen participation is essential to the community development process, however, has been made and defended. Therefore, emphasis must be placed on facilitating citizen participation in development efforts aimed toward improving the community as a whole, so that community members can work together to identify common goals and have a legitimate voice in public decision-making without become bogged down in issue-specific struggles right away. Citizen involvement in this kind of community development not only builds the community overall, but also serves to increase public support of more narrowly focused community development efforts because citizens feel they are a part of, and have a greater trust, in local government.

CHAPTER III
CITIZEN PARTICIPATION THROUGH COMMUNITY MEETINGS

The value of citizen participation as a part of community development having been established, this chapter considers community meetings as a means of facilitating such participation. It begins by explaining how community meetings are distinct from public hearings, which are the standard way in which the public is involved in more narrowly focused community development efforts. An overview of various models of the community development process then demonstrates how community meetings fit into that process, and provides further support to the claim that citizen participation is key to community development. Two models of community meetings are presented as examples of the various purposes of, and approaches to conducting, community meetings. Finally, various components of community development are discussed individually.

Community Meetings Are Not Public Hearings

In considering community meetings as a viable option for establishing public participation in the community development process, it is necessary to distinguish them from the typical public hearing. Government agencies make frequent use of the public hearing as a means of generating public input on specific issues, and also as a way to meet legal requirements for public involvement in "public" decisions. Public hearings as an avenue of public

participation, however, are heavily criticized. Such criticism focuses upon the fact that most government decision-making happens before the public hearing is conducted, and that the hearing is thus an empty formality. Public hearings typically do not give citizens an opportunity to take part in critical steps of decision-making such as the exchange of information, discussion, and development of plans or strategies. Public hearings promote citizen involvement which is reactive rather than proactive, and the results are often adversarial, and productive only in the sense that they may allow citizens to stop or slow down a particular decision or project.

In his book, Community and the Politics of Place, Dan Kemmis discusses the dilemma of public hearings, explaining that public hearings are our society's "chosen way" of involving the public in public decisions. The term "public hearing," claims Kemmis, implies that the public will hold some kind of honest conversation with itself. In the United States, however, public hearings are often utilized only to ensure the protection of citizens' due process rights under the Fifth and Fourteenth Amendments to the Constitution. Due process requires that citizens be given notice of any government action that might affect them and an opportunity to express their opinion regarding such action. Thus, government entities typically use public hearings not as a way to involve the public in decision-making, but instead as

a means of fulfilling their obligation to provide citizens due process.[24]

Public hearings in this sense are really not an opportunity for dialogue among citizens or between them and government. Rather, public hearings are simply an opportunity for individuals and groups to address their specific concerns to decision-makers in an effort to influence them in a certain way. The process necessarily pits individuals and special interest groups against one another as they compete for the attention and support of the decision-makers. It removes the burden of working together to solve public problems and make responsible choices from individuals and special interest groups, and places it upon elected officials and other public decision-makers.

Community meetings are more pro-active than public hearings. Although the purpose of meetings will vary, they typically provide an opportunity for individuals to come together and share ideas before any preliminary decisions are made. They also tend to take place much earlier in the community development or decision-making process, or, as discussed earlier, as a part of an effort toward the overall development of the community, and thus the "stakes" are often much lower for the participants. The following discussion shows how community meetings fit into the

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[24]Daniel Kemmis, Community and the Politics of Place (Norman, Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press, 1990), 52-53.

community development process as a vital source of citizen input and as an avenue for dialogue among citizens and between the citizens and government.

Community Meetings as a Part of Community Development

Community meetings are a critical part of the community development process. As noted above, they are a source of citizen input and information, which act as catalysts for community action. An examination of various models of the community development process demonstrates more clearly the role community meetings play in that process.

Richard Cawley, a social scientist at Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec, performed a study in 1989 designed to determine which incidents participants in the community development process identified as critical. In presenting the results of his study, Cawley utilized a model of the change process in group activity developed by Kurt Lewin.[25] The three-step model identifies the following stages of change: unfreezing, moving, and refreezing. The first step, unfreezing, corresponds to Cawley's description of the first part of the community development process, which he describes as "awareness of community concern."

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[25]Kurt Lewin, "Group Decision and Social Change," cited in Readings in Social Psychology, ed. Eleanor E. Macoby, Theodore M. Newcomb, and Eugene Hartley (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1958), 330-344, cited in Richard Cawley, "From the Participants' Viewpoint: A Basic Model of the Community Development Process," Journal of the Community Development Society 20, n. 2 (1989): 108.

Cawley explains that it is during this stage that community members come together and identify common concerns and problems. Community meetings are one means by which this happens, and such meetings early in the community development process were identified by the subjects of Cawley's study as "important events." While Cawley points out that these meetings are not the source of many decisions, they do provide information, raise consciousness, and establish some form of organization and leadership.[26]

A second model of the community development process is provided by Jack D. Timmons and Jack D. McCall, who studied the process of community development in Hamilton, Missouri. Their model outlines three steps in the community development process: recognition, intelligence, and commitment. The recognition part of the process was triggered by the local railroad company's decision to abandon its line running through the Hamilton. This convinced local residents that their community was at risk of dying, and led them to begin working with a specialist in community development and to hold community meetings to identify possible steps that could be taken to revitalize their town. Community meetings were also a key part of the intelligence phase of Hamilton's community development, as

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[26]Richard Cawley, "From the Participants' Viewpoint: A Basic Model of the Community Development Process," Journal of the Community Development Society 20, no. 2 (1989): 108.

they were a source of ideas and information which community members than translated into tangible plans for action.[27]

A third model of community development is presented in Take Charge: Economic Development in Small Communities. Although the specific focus of the workbook is local economic development, it follows a pattern or process common to other models of community development. It emphasizes the empowerment of local citizens in order to gain public involvement and support for local economic development efforts, and organizes specific activities around three questions. They are: 1) where are we now? 2) where do we want to be? and 3) how do we get there? According to the workbook, each section, or question rather, requires at least one community meeting. The meetings provide forums in which information can both be gathered from, and shared with, community members.[28]

Clearly, community meetings play an important role in the community development process. They give citizens an opportunity to come together to assess their current situation and begin discussing the ways in which they want their community to develop in the future. As the various models of the community development process show, citizen

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[27]Jack D. Timmons and Jack D. McCall, "Hamilton, Missouri: A Community Development Process Case Study," Sociological Practice (1990): 117-119.

[28]Janet Ayres and others, Take Charge: Economic Development in Small Communities (Ames, Iowa: North Central Regional Center for Rural Development, January 1990), 2-3.

participation through community meetings allows for the "unfreezing" or "recognition" critical in getting citizens started in efforts to change or improve their community. Examples of the reasons for, and methods of, conducting such meetings are presented in the following discussion of two specific community meetings.

Models of Community Meetings

Each community meeting will reflect its particular goal, the participants, and a specific process or agenda. Two examples of community meetings are presented here. The first, Missoula's *Vision 2020*, is actually a series of community meetings centering around the question, "What do you want Missoula to be like in the year 2020?" The purpose of the project is to generate citizen participation and input to give local decision-makers an understanding of citizens' desires for the community's future. Thus, the information-gathering aspect of the process and how the information is organized and presented are key to *Vision 2020*. The second example is not of a specific community meeting, but is rather a process for conducting community meetings referred to as "futuring." While the goal of the futuring process is also to gather information, the way in which citizens are brought into the process is its noteworthy aspect.

Vision 2020. *Vision 2020* is a project that began in Missoula, Montana in June of 1992 and is on-going at this time. Missoula's Mayor Dan Kemmis developed the idea for *Vision 2020* out of a concern that rapid growth in the Missoula area is increasing demands on local government and seriously impacting its ability to provide services. He and other local leaders share the view that a one-year plan is insufficient for the management of the Missoula's local government. Thus, Kemmis and the department heads in Missoula's city government agreed that a series of community meetings could serve as a citizen-driven process that would yield information about the direction in which local residents want the community to move and ideas for getting there. An additional purpose for the meeting was to help build the sense of community among Missoula residents and increase their confidence and involvement in local government.[29]

Vision 2020 is comprised of four phases, each of which is based upon one or more community meetings. The first phase called upon local citizens to identify their current concerns regarding the Missoula community. In order to facilitate this process, one community-wide meeting was conducted in June of 1992. All community members were invited to attend, and those participating in the meeting

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[29]Phil Smith, Community Development Consultant, interview by author, 7 April 1993, recorded in notes, Missoula, Montana.

were asked to answer the following three questions: 1) what is most important to you about Missoula? 2) what local concerns need to be addressed? and 3) what are your hopes and dreams for Missoula? During the meeting, participants were divided into small groups and given an opportunity to respond to the three questions. The list of community members' values, concerns, and hopes and dreams were collected and then organized into seven categories: 1) community size and design; 2) physical environment; 3) community spirit and attitudes; 4) culture and education; 5) public services and infrastructure; 6) economy; and 7) governing.[30]

Community "visioning" was the second phase of *Vision 2020,* and it called upon community members to envision how they would like Missoula to be in the year 2020. The reason the visioning was done separately from the identification of current concerns, according to consultant Phil Smith, was that it is often difficult to get people to look past immediate problems or fears. Thus, the first meeting allowed people to vent their more immediate concerns, while the second stage of the process encouraged them to see past present problems and look to the future.[31] A series of smaller community meetings were organized and conducted over a period of three days at various public schools throughout

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[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

Missoula. At each of those meetings, participants were asked to work within one of the seven areas described above (education was established as a separate, eighth category). The result was a set of "visions" within each category, which were also compiled into a report.

That report, "Missoula at a Crossroads: Community Visions for the Year 2020," was published in Missoula's local newspaper in late March of 1993.[32] The "visions" generated during the second phase of the project were organized into three new categories: 1) physical environment; 2) community life; and 3) livelihoods and politics. Out of the visions came six challenges to be faced by the Missoula community. They are: 1) the challenge of urban design; 2) the challenge of quality development; 3) the challenge of a caring community; 4) the challenge of economy; 5) the challenge of governing; and 6) the challenge of combining "big city" with "small town."

Vision 2020 is now in its third phase, during which community members will work to develop strategies for addressing each one of the six challenges. Another series of community meetings will be held and participants will work together to develop five-year plans for addressing each of the six challenges. The final part of *Vision 2020* is described as the commitment phase and will take place once

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[32] *Vision 2020* Steering Committee, "Missoula at a Crossroads:Community Visions for the Year 2020," Missoulian 28 March 1993, supplement.

strategies have been developed. At that point, community members will be asked to actually contribute their effort in addressing one of the six challenges.

Futuring. Another model of community meetings is based upon the process of futuring. This model was developed by Mary Emery of the Institute for Community Development at Lewis-Clark State College in Idaho. The process, referred to in full as *Community Goal Setting through Futuring,* facilitates the participation of a wide cross section of community members in the community planning process. In an overview of the process, Mary Emery explains that community development efforts often focus on a specific need or project. While those interested in that particular project will get involved in the decision-making process, many other members of the community are often inadvertently left out. Then, as the project matures, dissension develops because some people believe the project threatens their interests or fails to represent their needs. The futuring process was developed as a way to assess a whole community's common vision for the future so that specific projects would reflect shared concerns and enjoy more broad public support.[33]

The futuring process focuses upon community groups as a means of drawing citizens into community decision-making.

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[33]Mary E. Emery, "Community Goal Setting Through Futuring: Community Planning Through Community Involvement," (Institute for Community Development: Lewis-Clark State College, undated), 3.

It is comprised of a series of meetings among existing community groups during which the participants discuss and identify their concerns and visions for the community's future. All of the information gathered during the futuring process is then compiled and presented at a community-wide meeting.

The first phase of the process is the orientation, during which local leaders are educated about futuring, and are encouraged, and given an opportunity, to commit to the process. Planning for the futuring process is done during the second phase. A list of community groups is developed and project facilitators agree which groups they will contact. A one-month period of time is selected for the futuring process, and dates for training sessions and the large, community-wide meeting are set.

Phase three of the futuring process involves the recruitment of groups to participate in project. A letter is sent to all community groups from a local leader (i.e. mayor) or head of the futuring steering committee. Committee members also agree to contact group representatives by phone or in person to encourage participation. Each group is asked to participate by sending a group member to the futuring training, and by conducting a group meeting some time during the futuring month so that the process can be conducted within the group. A public relations campaign is also conducted during this

phase to educate the community about the futuring process and encourage participation.

The training of group representatives takes place during phase four. During the training, the futuring process is modeled and explained. Phase five is the actual futuring process, during which group representatives go back and lead their respective groups through the futuring process. The project committee also holds open futuring meetings for those who may not be connected with a specific group or those who cannot attend their group's futuring meeting. All of the lists of goals generated are collected by the project committee and compiled. The goals are presented during a community-wide meeting. This meeting, or debriefing, is the sixth phase of the futuring process, and gives community members an opportunity to discuss the results of the futuring process and begin to work together to develop strategies for addressing shared community needs and concerns. The seventh and final part of the futuring process is the follow-up phase. Task forces or work groups are formed to begin working on the implementation of specific goals. Members for these groups are recruited during the community-wide meeting.[34]

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[34]Ibid, 13.

Components of Community Meetings

Vision 2020 and the futuring process are examples of the way in which community meetings can be utilized to involve citizens in the community development process. In order to plan and conduct effective community meetings, it is necessary to be aware of, and prepared to address, their various components.

Goals and Purpose. Each community meeting will obviously be based upon a least one, and oftentimes a few, specific goals or purposes. Because the planning of a community meeting revolves around such goals, it is critical that meeting organizers be clear about the purpose of the meeting and the desired results.[35]

Community meetings are often used to solicit citizen input in order to allow the community itself to plan for community development. Both *Vision 2020* and the futuring process have as their main function the gathering of information from citizens. If the gathering of information is the goal of a community meeting, it is critical that there be a clear understanding of the kind of information being sought; in other words, establish the questions that the participants need to answer. Such questions may be broad (i.e. What is your vision for the future of this community?) or may reflect a specific community development effort already in progress (i.e. What is the best way to

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[35]Smith, interview by author.

finance a local sewer project?). Again, it is important to recognize that as community development efforts become more narrowly focused, increased citizen participation can lead to a greater number of expressed concerns and, potentially, greater conflict.

Another purpose of community meetings may be the accomplishment of a specific task, such as solving a problem or developing a plan of action. The Take Charge workbook on rural community development outlines a process of planning for community economic development. The final phase of the planning process revolves around the question, "How are we going to get there." The purpose of the community meeting held during this phase is to organize work groups and develop a plan of action which will lead the community toward economic development goals identified earlier in the planning process.[36]

Community meetings may also serve as a means of educating the public. The first phase of the Take Charge process asks the community to identify where it is in terms of its strengths and weaknesses relative to local economic development. The main purpose of the meeting is to provide information to local citizens so that they can be empowered to clearly assess the economic trends and characteristics of their community and make informed choices about its future. More specifically, this section of the Take Charge process

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[36]Ayres, 65.

is designed to give citizens, "... a better understanding of the economic, demographic, and fiscal conditions of the community."[37] Therefore, a significant portion of the meeting is devoted to the presentation of local census data which provides citizens with statistics such as age, sex, and employment status of local residents; employment by sector; personal income levels; and local business activity (i.e. bank deposits and new business starts). Planning a community meeting with education as its goal requires special attention to the collection of information or materials to be shared with community members.

Finally, an overall goal of community meetings is to provide an avenue for public participation and to build a sense of trust and ownership on the part of citizens toward government and the community development process. This broad aspect of community meetings requires them to be open and accessible to all members of the community. It is important to establish a meeting environment which is safe and non-threatening in order to encourage the sharing of ideas and concerns by all participants. Every element of the meeting must be geared to fostering citizen involvement and focused upon the well-being of the community as a whole.

Planning Community Meetings. A successful community meeting requires local leaders and key community members to "buy into" the meeting. In order to facilitate this, those

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[37]Ibid, 18.

with the initial idea for conducting a community meeting must work with leaders and other community members to generate support and participation. During this process, key individuals are educated about the reason or need for conducting a community meeting and the process to be followed. Additionally, these individuals are encouraged and given the opportunity to commit their time, energy, and support to the community meeting.

Before the plan for *Vision 2020* was ever developed, Missoula's Mayor Dan Kemmis called together a group of community leaders and activists and asked them to consider whether it was valuable for the community to come together and attempt to decide how to recognize, understand, and manage the change that was occurring in the Missoula area. He also asked this initial group to consider how such a process might work. As a result of this meeting, the group became committed to, and went on to develop and implement, *Vision 2020.* [38]

Once support for the community meeting has been gained, it is useful to develop a steering committee or work group that will be responsible for actually planning and conducting the meeting. The steering committee will often be comprised of leaders and community members who have supported the idea of the meeting, and may also include an

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[38] *Vision 2020* Steering Committee, "Report of October 1992 Meetings," (Missoula, Montana: Vision 2020 Steering Committee, March 1993), 1, photocopied.

outside consultant or expert with skills in organizing such events. It is also important that the committee represent various interests and groups within the community, such as agriculture, churches, senior citizens, real estate, retailers, industry, and schools. Examples of some of the responsibilities of the committee include: legitimizing the meeting among key community members; identifying and involving participants; developing the meeting agenda; and gathering data to be presented.[39]

A final consideration in forming the steering committee or work group is the role that it will play once the community meeting has been conducted. The committee can play a key role in organizing and facilitating the on-going efforts of the task forces or work groups who will pursue goals or address concerns raised during the community meeting.[40]

Process. The actual process or agenda of the meeting will understandably depend upon the type and purpose of the community meeting. *Vision 2020* and the futuring process, again, each embody a specific process representative of their respective goals and participants. Rather than reiterating specific parts of the process of those meetings,

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[39]Ayres, 4.

[40]Rosalie Cates and Judy Smith, Women's Opportunity and Resource Development Center, interview by author, 9 April 1993, recorded in notes, Missoula, Montana.

it is more useful to discuss brainstorming as one important part of the community meeting process.

Brainstorming is often utilized during community meetings because it is an effective method of generating many ideas in a short time, encourages creative and spontaneous thinking, helps people temporarily suspend judgment, and allows for the expansion of ideas.[41] Some simple rules for brainstorming are: 1) every idea is a good one; 2) no discussion or analysis of ideas is allowed; and 3) everyone participates.[42] In addition to generating ideas and information, brainstorming is also an effective way of bringing community members together in a neutral setting. The focus is not on analyzing ideas or solving problems, but instead is upon the opportunity for community members to come together and share their ideas and concerns in an open, accepting, and comfortable environment.

Participants. As with the other components of community meetings, the identification of meeting participants will depend upon the specific purpose and goals of the community meeting. It is important to recognize, however, that the overall theme of this paper and of community meetings themselves is citizen participation. Thus, any limitation of full participation by any and all

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[41]Ayres, 163.

[42]Emery, 21.

interested citizens must be carefully considered and generally discouraged.

Another important matter regarding the participants of community meetings is how to reach them and encourage their involvement. Meeting organizers face a substantial and critical task in "marketing" the meeting to community members. A first step in this process is identifying the community meeting as something more than a public hearing or a gathering to discuss just one or a few specific community issues. It can be presented as an open forum for the presentation of citizen concerns, to take place prior to any decision-making by local government or that "same old group" that controls everything. Another consideration is the manner in which people are contacted and notified about the meeting. The steering committee will want to contact and invite key community members. Also, it is valuable to work through established community groups to reach individual citizens. This helps ensure that people receive information about the meeting from someone they know and trust (i.e. their minister or fellow PTA member). This also helps build a sense of faith that the community meeting will be a legitimate opportunity for citizens to express their views.

Special Interest Groups. It is to be expected that most individuals participating in a community meeting will bring with them their own set of self-interested needs and priorities, and it is unrealistic to assume that there are

steps that can be taken to completely prevent this from happening. However, there is the possibility that by emphasizing the fact that the meeting will allow for idea sharing in a neutral and non-analytical environment, people will come together at least for a defined period of time, set aside their differences, and focus upon the needs of the community as a whole.

Robert Bellah and others discuss this topic in their article, "The Good Society." They explain that the American political arena has become dominated by, "... a congeries of private interests ... which fight it out without regard to how the outcome affects the good of the community as a whole."[43] As these often well-organized and powerful special interests make greater and greater demands upon our public institutions, they fail to recognize that they are depleting the, "institutional infrastructure upon which any common good, or even the ability of the system to continue to produce individual goods, depends."[44] The authors maintain that only by strengthening institutional politics can democracy be renewed and the neglect of the common good checked. Specifically, they suggest that an "active citizenry" and the development of "organizational forms in which citizen participation can be meaningful" are key to

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[43]Robert N. Bellah and others, "The Good Society," The Responsive Community: Rights and Responsibilities 1, no. 3 (Summer, 1991): 28.

[44]Ibid, 29.

focusing attention to the common good in America.[45] In explaining how the influence of special interests does not necessarily have to defeat the purpose of citizen participation, the authors state, "Research suggests that when citizens are engaged in thinking about the whole, they find their conceptions of their interests broadened, and their commitment to the search for a common good deepened."[46]

It is also useful to consider the value of special interest groups as a source of information. Community meetings can give individuals and groups a chance to come together and share ideas and information early in the community development process. Community meetings have the potential to allow those with conflicting interests to find common ground before a particular community development strategy is formulated. While this is only a possibility, it is much more certain that such common ground will be more difficult to find after a strategy is already in place.

Facilitators. Facilitators play a key role during community meetings, and serve two essential roles. First, facilitators lead the participants through the meeting process. They provide participants with an overview of the meeting so that everyone knows what to expect and why. The facilitator explains how various activities will work and

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[45]Ibid, 30.

[46]Ibid, 32.

then helps keep participants on task as they carry out those activities.[47] The second role of the facilitator is to serve as a neutral party or "peacekeeper." This means that while the facilitator guides the participants through the meeting and various activities, he or she concentrates on the process, and avoids contributing his or her ideas or criticizing those of the participants.[48] This is a particularly important consideration for facilitators of community meetings because a specific goal of such meetings is to provide a setting in which community members can share ideas without the threat of criticism or close scrutiny. Thus, the facilitator of a community meeting must not only explain and conduct meeting activities, but must also serve as a referee to ensure that all participants have an opportunity to express their views.

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[47]Ibid, 19.

[48]Michael Doyle and David Straus, How to Make Meetings Work (New York: Berkley Publishing Group, 1982), 90.

CHAPTER IV
TROY TOWN MEETING

An overview of the Troy Town Meeting begins with background information clarifying events leading up to the community meeting. Included in the background information will be a discussion of the role of the outside consultant, Northwest Community Consultants, hired to organize and conduct the Troy Town Meeting. Specific details of the actual meeting, including notification of potential participants, meeting logistics, and the information gathering process, will also be addressed. The outcome of the meeting and a summary of participants' evaluations of the meeting will follow. The chapter will conclude with a discussion of the potential long-term results of the Troy Town Meeting.

Background

In the spring of 1992, after deciding that the sewer issue some how needed to be addressed, the Troy City Council sought the advice of community consultant, Dr. Patrick Edgar. In an initial meeting with local leaders, Edgar advised the group that it would be highly unlikely, if not impossible, for the city to receive full outside funding for the construction of a sewer system. The challenge, then, was finding as much outside funding as possible and convincing local citizens to agree to pay for a portion of a sewer project. Edgar informed the City Council that it

would have to show strong evidence of local support before it could hope to receive outside funding or grants for a sewer system. This was true, he explained, not only because proof of community support is a normal requirement for funding requests, but also because state and federal officials would have to be convinced that money given to Troy would not be returned again due to a lack of public support.

It was recommended that the city canvass local residents in order to assess their opinions on the sewer issue and other matters such as recreational opportunities, economic development, and the performance of local government. Edgar pointed out to the local leaders that a canvass would help clarify the needs and priorities of local citizens and begin to convince the citizens of Troy that they had a say in the decisions of their local government. This would be an important step, added Edgar, if the leaders hoped to generate public support for a sewer system. The City Council accepted the advice, and after going through a bidding process, hired Edgar and Northwest Community Consultants to conduct the canvass. The author became involved in the project as an assistant to Edgar.

The Canvass. In addition to generating information regarding citizens' views on the sewer issue, the canvass was to serve at least three additional purposes. First, it would assess community opinion on a broad range of issues

and help leaders determine whether a new sewer system was indeed a priority for local citizens. A second purpose of the canvass was to fulfill the requirements of various state and federal agencies for community involvement in project development and requests for outside funding. Finally, the City Council recognized the fact that the 1981 sewer project had left a bitter taste in citizens' mouths, and that there was a serious lack of trust and communication between local government and Troy citizens. A canvass sponsored by the City Council could help show a sincere commitment on the part of local leaders to allow the citizens themselves to define local needs and concerns, and would hopefully begin to repair the rift between local leaders and community members.

The canvass was conducted in June of 1992. It was administered by local volunteers, who took the canvass instrument to residents' homes and left them to be completed for pick-up the following afternoon. Out of 340 questionnaires that were distributed, 307 were completed and returned. The high response rate alone indicated that the community was indeed interested in its future.[49]

While the canvass results did indicate a clear recognition on the part of local citizens that Troy needs a city sewer system, only 57 percent of the respondents

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[49]Northwest Community Consultants, "Report of Findings - Community Canvass for the City of Troy, Montana," August 1992, 5.

indicated that they would be willing to pay a monthly fee to fund the system.[50] Other issues such as the lack of alcohol-free recreational opportunities for young adults and the need for more local jobs clearly held equal, if not greater, priority than the sewer system. Another significant result of the canvass was the response to questions regarding the performance of local government. Ninety-five percent of the respondents rated volunteer services (i.e. fire and ambulance) as being either "excellent" or "good." The performance of the city council, however, was considered to be either "fair" or "poor" by over 60 percent of the respondents.[51] These results were explained by the fact that individuals tend to show much more support for services or projects to which they feel connected or believe they somehow control.[52] They were presented to the City Council as further evidence of a strong need to build community trust and citizen involvement.

Based upon the results of the canvass, Edgar suggested three alternatives to the City Council. First, they could move ahead on a sewer project and hope that the marginal level of public support would not be quashed by a stronger opposition movement. Secondly, the council could simply put

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[50]Ibid, 30.

[51]Ibid, 27-28.

[52]Ibid, 28.

the sewer project on hold until such time when the citizens recognized a greater need for a system and thus become more supportive. Finally, the leaders could begin a public education and dialogue effort in order foster trust and involvement within the community and to empower Troy citizens to make informed decisions about the sewer system and other local concerns.[53] In further discussion with the City Council, Edgar suggested that if the citizens and leaders could work together on the successful completion of a community project besides the sewer system (i.e. building a youth recreation center), it was likely that the sense of accomplishment and spirit of cooperation created by their achievement would provide the right setting to begin organizing for the construction of a sewer system.

The Troy Town Meeting

The Troy City Council agreed with and accepted the conclusion that support for a sewer project was shaky at best, and were left wondering exactly what to do next. Although they were enthusiastic about the idea of moving ahead on some type of community development effort, they were not certain what specific concern should be addressed or how. They also acknowledged the strong need to build citizen trust and involvement. With assistance from Edgar, the group decided that a community meeting would be an

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[53]Ibid, 32.

effective way to bring citizens together to identify and prioritize their visions and goals for Troy's future, and to then form work groups to actually begin pursuing those goals. The meeting was also viewed as a way to build the community's commitment to and trust in local community development efforts.

It was agreed that Northwest Community Consultants would provide on-going services to Troy by organizing and conducting the Troy Town Meeting. The community meeting would be an opportunity for everyone in Troy to come together and present their concerns and ideas. As a group, the meeting participants would then identify top five goals to be accomplished in Troy over the next ten years, and finally, would be asked to commit their time and assistance to at least one community goal. The decision to conduct the community meeting was reached in December of 1992, and the meeting was tentatively scheduled to take place in February or March of 1993. In late February of 1993, it was announced that the local Asarco Mine, employing approximately 300 Troy residents, would be closing in April. The announcement invigorated local leaders' interest and commitment to the Troy Town Meeting, and the City Council confirmed a meeting date in late April of 1993.

Identifying and Contacting the Participants. One point that was emphasized early in planning the meeting was the need to involve as many Troy citizens as possible. Edgar

explained that it was vital that the community's significant groups or special interests be involved in the meeting so that they too would have a sense of ownership and support regarding the outcome of the event. By excluding any important local "players," the City Council risked the potential for such groups or individuals to surface later and object that they had not been included in the initial discussion and planning of local community development efforts.

In theory, if local special interest groups were involved in the meeting, they too would have a say in identifying and committing to the community's top five goals. Their involvement in the meeting would require them to share in the responsibility for identifying and pursuing the community's top five goals. While it would be naive and unrealistic to think that special interests and individual concerns would not influence the planning and implementation of specific community development projects, one important purpose of the meeting was to provide an initial forum during which participants could work together to focus on common goals and Troy's "common good."

It was agreed that the most effective and efficient way to involve Troy's various groups and interests in the community meeting would be to contact individuals representative of those groups by letter and invite them to participate in the Troy Town Meeting. The City Council was

asked to develop a list of local citizens who could serve as links to various community sectors or interests. Once a list of key citizens was provided to the consultant, those identified were mailed a letter (see Appendix A) explaining the purpose of the meeting and inviting them to participate. The letter emphasized that the meeting was open to all, and individuals were encouraged to invite other community members to attend. Additionally, the letter requested volunteers who would be willing to serve as small group facilitators during the meeting.

In addition to mailing letters to those identified by the City Council, an effort was made to notify as many community members as possible about the meeting. Flyers (see Appendix B) were produced by the consultant and sent to the council members for posting throughout the community. A press release (see Appendix C) was distributed and stories regarding the meeting appeared in three local newspapers. A notice of the meeting was run on the local advertising channel. The two main concerns in announcing the meeting were encouraging as many people as possible to attend and ensuring community members that although some had received a letter about the meeting, everyone was indeed invited to attend.

Meeting Logistics. The meeting agenda (see Appendix D) reflected the purposes of the event: 1) to build a sense of community and trust in Troy; 2) to identify the community's

top five goals for the next ten years; and 3) to formulate work groups committed to carrying out identified goals. The agenda included an opportunity for the local mayor to talk with the participants, provided for a small group activity during which all participants could share their ideas in a non-threatening atmosphere, and emphasized the importance of the group working together as a whole to define, and then pursue, community goals.

The City Council decided against scheduling the meeting on a Saturday or Sunday because many Troy residents leave town or have other plans during the weekends. They originally set the meeting for a Friday, from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m., but then decided that too many people working during the day would be excluded. Finally, the meeting was scheduled for a Friday, from 4:00 until 9:00 p.m. Although some council members expressed a concern that the meeting would be too long, it was agreed that one longer meeting was preferred to a series of shorter meetings. This decision reflected a concern that it would be difficult to encourage people to attend more than one meeting, addressed the inconvenience of bringing the consultant from Missoula several times, and took into consideration the value of bringing people together for an extended period of time to thoroughly discuss and identify community goals. Troy's small population also made the possibility of conducting a single, community-wide meeting more viable.

The meeting was held at the local senior citizens center. It was the most desirable location, first, because it was one of the few local facilities large enough for the event, and also, because it would accommodate small groups working in various corners or parts of the room. An additional consideration was the availability of kitchen facilities so that a potluck dinner could be included on the agenda. The senior center also proved to be an effective meeting site because most participants recognized it as a common, neutral gathering place utilized by many different community members and groups.

Approximately 45 community members were present when the meeting began. Following a half-hour sign-in period, the meeting was opened by Mayor Roger Kensler, who made introductions and gave a brief explanation of the purpose for the event. Dr. Pat Edgar, the consultant, then talked with the participants about the importance of citizen involvement in local government, reminded the group that as citizens they are the government, and encouraged all those present to move past the typical "us vs. them" mentality that many Americans hold regarding their government. Participants were asked to assume responsibility for making decisions regarding the future of their community. Following this, Leslie Reid explained the small group activity that would be utilized in order to generate the

concerns and ideas that would serve as the foundation for identifying the community's top five goals.

The Information Gathering Process. One priority of the meeting was to provide an open and cooperative atmosphere in which the participants could express their views regarding the community's future. With this in mind, the first stage of the information gathering process was a small group activity during which participants brainstormed responses to the following four questions: 1) what do you like best about Troy? 2) what are the most important things that have to happen in Troy over the next ten years? 3) what resources do we need in order to accomplish those goals? and 4) what resources do we already have? The "rules" of brainstorming were reviewed with the participants, and it was emphasized that the small group activity was an opportunity for community members to share ideas, and not a time to critique or analyze those ideas. Once the top five goals were identified, Reid noted, the corresponding work groups would then address more specific questions and concerns. During the brainstorming, however, ideas were not to be picked apart and each was to be considered a good one.

Each participant had a color code on his or her name tag, and was assigned accordingly to a small group. Local volunteers, who had participated in a brief training prior to the meeting, served as the small group facilitators (see Appendix E). They led the brainstorming activity and

recorded the participants' responses. The facilitators helped keep the small groups on task, and were encouraged to remain as neutral as possible while ensuring that each group member had an opportunity to contribute his or her ideas.

Once the small groups completed the brainstorming activity, the groups' lists were collected and the participants broke for a potluck dinner served on site. During dinner, the consultants compiled into one large list the responses to the question, "What are the most important things that need to happen in Troy over the next ten years?" In an effort to condense the list, duplicate ideas were listed only once. This sometimes required the consultants to "guess" the meaning of various ideas in order to combine them with other similar suggestions, which then necessitated checking with participants to ensure that all of their ideas were indeed reflected on the final list.

About 15 additional participants arrived during the dinner break, many citing work as the reason they had not joined the meeting earlier. After dinner, the overall list of the community's goals for the next ten years was presented to the group as a whole. Once all ideas had been clarified, Edgar led the group in an activity to refine the list. First, the group was asked to identify any item on the list which they felt should be removed. If an item was suggested for removal, then other participants were given an opportunity to defend the item. If any defense was offered,

the item remained on the list. Secondly, each item on the list was reviewed and participants were asked to indicate whether or not the item should stay on the list. If no one spoke up for an item, it was removed from the list. Finally, the participants worked together to combine various items that logically belonged together as a single item. For example, a number of different suggestions for recreation facilities (i.e. swimming pool, baseball diamonds, and walking paths) were combined into one item labelled "recreation park."

This particular process was one of the most successful elements of the meeting. Because conversation was limited to simply identifying and briefly defending various items on the list, the activity did not become a "free for all" for criticism or disagreement. What it did facilitate, however, was a productive review of various ideas and explanations why the ideas had been suggested at all. The "light bulb" effect was evident, as one participant would scoffingly suggest that an item be removed from the list only to receive a firm, but typically friendly, explanation why the item was legitimate. The explanations and information being exchanged from one participant to another led to a shared understanding among the participants regarding all of the ideas on the list. This aspect of the meeting in particular suggests that an open and idea-generating forum, which can

be provided at a community meeting, can allow community members to work together cooperatively with one another.

Once the "elimination" process was complete, a final list of community goals was presented, and the participants were asked to identify the most important items on that list. Each participant was given five small self-adhesive blue dots and instructed to place one of his or her dots next to each of the most important items on the list.[54] Each participant could place only one of his or her dots next to any single item, and could, if they chose, use only one or some of their five dots. Dots were not to be "given away," although needless to say, the participants were anxious to hang onto their dots! The participants were given fifteen minutes to place their dots next to the "most important" items on the list.

Meeting Outcomes. Once the participants finished distributing their dots, the group reassembled to examine the results of the process. Five items emerged as having clear priority among the participants. They were: 1) a local sewer system; 2) economic diversification; 3) a community center; 4) local dispatch services; and 5) community beautification. The announcement of the top five goals created a "buzz" of discussion among the participants, which appeared to reflect the group's satisfaction at having

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[54]This idea was borrowed from Mary Emery's "futuring" process. She calls for the use of stick-on stars.

agreed upon five clear goals for their community's future. Although there was no time allotted for any detailed discussion of the top five items, Dr. Edgar did address each one briefly, identifying some potential strategies and concerns to be considered in the planning and implementation of each goal. The actual work of addressing specific concerns and coming up with realistic alternatives for accomplishing the goals, however, would have to be taken on by work groups comprised of local citizens.

Leslie Reid then addressed the participants and explained that one work group for each goal would be created. Participants were asked to sign-up for at least one work group. Those interested in working with the City Council to organize the work groups were asked to indicate so on the sign-up sheets. The participants were informed that the City Council and those interested in organizing the work groups would be meeting in the near future to clarify the process by which the work groups would function and to schedule the first round of work group meetings.

An average of five to ten participants signed up for each work group. Only one or two people within each work group indicated a willingness to participate in organizing the work group process. The meeting was concluded with an announcement from Mayor Kensler that the City Council would be meeting the following week and would begin discussing the organization of the work groups. Participants were thanked

for their hard work and involvement, and were asked to complete a post-meeting evaluation (see Appendix F) before leaving.

Participants' Evaluation of the Meeting. Forty participants completed the brief evaluation form provided by the consultant. The evaluation was comprised of seven open-ended questions. The first question asked participants to indicate how they had heard about the meeting. Eight participants became aware of the meeting through one of the local newspapers or by reading a posted flyer, while thirteen participants were notified about the meeting either by friends or contacts within local organizations such as the Troy Chamber of Commerce. Twenty participants indicated that they heard about the meeting through the letter sent out by the consultant. Although the newspaper coverage was helpful in drawing some participants, most of those attending the meeting heard about it either by mail or from a friend or fellow group member. These responses demonstrate the value of personal and direct communication to citizens regarding an upcoming community meeting.

It is important to note that most of the participants of the Troy Town Meeting were those who had been identified as important local leaders or active citizens. This is cause for concern that, quite possibly, the "same old people who do everything" were the ones who attended the meeting. This is particularly troubling given the high response rate

to the community canvass conducted prior to the Troy Town Meeting. The response rate suggested that most Troy residents are concerned about the community's future. Despite such concern, many of them, for whatever reason, chose not to attend the meeting. Given that the none of the top five community goals agreed upon at the meeting were related to issues such as welfare or public housing, it is likely that low income residents dependent upon such services were not present at the meeting. This lends extra merit to the claim that significant steps must be taken to include citizens from as many different local "sectors" as possible.

When asked why they attended the meeting, most participants explained that it was because they are interested in the future of their community. Many indicated that they were satisfied with the manner in which the meeting was conducted, with several commenting that it ran on-time and was well organized. As expected, some participants felt the meeting was too long.

The participants were then asked to describe the best part of the meeting. A variety of responses to this question were received, but in general, most of the participants indicated that either the overall process of sharing ideas or, more specifically, the small group activity, was the best part of the meeting. This response appears to reflect a strong desire on the part of community

members to have their voices heard and to feel a sense of belonging to Troy community.

While no single item was clearly identified as the "worst" part of the meeting, seven participants did identify what they called the "elimination process," during which time the list of ideas was narrowed down and clarified, as the worst part of the meeting. This response was unexpected, given the high level of communication and understanding that seemed to have occurred while the list was being refined. What the responses may reflect, however, is the amount of emotional energy and actual time required to go through the work of explaining, understanding, and accepting one another's ideas and concerns. The process took approximately one hour, and thus represented the single largest amount of time the participants were asked to focus on a single task. Additionally, the process required the group to work together as a whole, which necessitated the calling out of comments or responses and resulted in that portion of the meeting being somewhat noisy and uncontrolled. In responding to the evaluation, the participants also might have felt "forced" to identify a "worst" part of the meeting. This would explain why a limited number of participants focused upon the "elimination" process as the worst part of the meeting, and gives cause to question the level of intensity behind such responses.

It is also possible that meeting participants criticized this portion of the meeting because it was the only activity during which at least some level of conflict and disagreement surfaced. As the community members discussed and clarified their ideas, some of the participants might have become uncomfortable or frustrated. This reinforces the claim that facilitating citizen participation in the community development process represents a much greater challenge once specific issues or concerns become the focus of attention.

The participants were also asked to indicate first what they felt "should" happen as a result of the community meeting, and secondly, what they thought "will" actually happen. Unfortunately, the two questions were asked together and the responses were difficult to sort out according to the "should" and the "will" portions of the questions. This may suggest that many of the participants viewed what "should" and what "will" happen as being the same. The responses may also reflect the fact that the "should" portion of the question came first and was the part of the question responded to by most. At any rate, the responses generally fell into one of three categories. About 20 of the participants indicated that they believed more community participation and cooperation would be generated through the meeting. These responses were generally optimistic, and indicated a belief that the

meeting would produce tangible results. Another thirteen respondents were less optimistic and indicated that they were unsure, or didn't know, what the outcome of the meeting would be. While most of these were non-committal in their answers, one responded that the "same old core group" would do the follow-up and another felt that "probably nothing" would result. The remaining participants, five people, responded that the development of a local sewer system would be the result of the meeting.

The final question of the evaluation asked participants to indicate whether or not they felt that they had been given an opportunity to have their opinion heard during the meeting. Every respondent answered a direct "yes" to this question. This positive response corresponds with the earlier indication by many of the participants that either the small group activity, or the general sharing of ideas, was the best part of the meeting.

Potential Long-Term Results

Ideally, the citizens of Troy will now move ahead to organize work groups which will plan and implement strategies to accomplish the community's top five goals. In reality, however, a number of factors will influence the long-term results of the Troy Town Meeting. One way of discussing those factors is by addressing them relative to the three key outcomes of the meeting.

The most tangible result of the meeting was the identification of the community's top five goals for the next ten years. The obvious challenge faced by the community, then, is accomplishing those goals. The goals themselves and how they were established represent one key factor in the community's chances for success in fulfilling the goals. A total of about 60 people participated in the Troy Town Meeting. Several of those were individuals that had been identified on the City Council's list of active citizens or important links to various local organizations or sectors, and were invited by letter to attend the meeting. This could mean that the individuals who attended the meeting adequately represented a good cross-section of the community. It could also mean that only "the same old group" that typically becomes involved in most community issues showed up for the meeting. If this is the case, then a significant number of Troy citizens may feel that their concerns were not represented at the meeting, and thus have very little ownership of or support for the five community goals. If the community is to be successful in accomplishing its goals, it is critical that an effort be made to educate the community how the top five goals were decided and to gain its support for the goals.

A second outcome of the meeting was the commitment made by most participants to serve on at least one goal-related work group. How these groups are organized and the process

they follow in carrying out their respective goals will be critical to their success. At least one community member expressed concern that self-interested groups of citizens with their own agendas might "pack" work groups focusing on an issue in which these individuals have a special stake. One means of addressing this potential problem is for the City Council to form a steering committee responsible for developing a process of appointing or selecting work group members to help ensure that a variety of interests or groups are represented within each group. To be successful, the steering committee will have to be viewed as a legitimate representative of the community and not a privileged tool of the City Council or local special interests. It is also critical, however, that anyone interested in participating in the work groups be given a full opportunity to do so. The steering committee could address this concern by establishing guidelines requiring that all work group activities would be well advertised, open, and accessible. Overall, the formation and function of the work groups is a significant project in itself and will require careful attention.

Finally, the Troy Town Meeting provided an opportunity for community members to work together in identifying mutual needs and concerns, and represented an important step in developing citizen involvement in and commitment to local community development. As indicated above, this was one of

the specific reasons why the City Council decided to hold the community meeting. The continued nurturing of trust between local leaders and the community members, then, has potential to be another long-term result of the meeting. Whether or not this actually occurs, however, will certainly depend on the level of commitment the leaders have toward this end. It is relatively simple to give citizens an opportunity to say what they want. In order to follow through on that process, however, the City Council must now find ways to carry out the community's top five goals. Effective work groups can contribute a great deal to this effort, but the ultimate authority to make decisions and take action still rests with the local government. In order to gain and keep the trust of Troy citizens, the City Council will have to address concerns raised by community members. In order to get things done, however, the leaders will still have to make sometimes difficult choices and potentially unpopular decisions. Thus, they will be forced to walk the proverbial fine line between nurturing a healthy, two-way, and open relationship with their constituents and fulfilling their roles as public decision-makers.

CHAPTER V
CONCLUSION

Community development efforts that are focused upon specific problems or goals often preclude extensive citizen participation. The scope of the project may be so narrow that only a limited number of citizens are interested, affected, or aware enough to take time to become involved. Many of the planning and decision-making responsibilities associated with such efforts rest with an expert or authority. The lack of public involvement in this kind of community development can leave citizens feeling "left out" and uninformed, and needing to find a way to gain control over government. The community's rejection of the Troy sewer project in 1981, and the 1978 passage of California's Proposition 13, are examples of how citizens can react when they do feel excluded from, and without of control of, public decision-making.

Public hearings are one of the most common ways in which citizens are involved in issue-specific community development. Instead of giving participants an opportunity to share ideas and work together to solve problems, public hearings are typically designed only to give members of the public a chance to express their views on a set of pre-determined solutions to a previously defined problem. As a means of citizen participation, public hearings often serve only to further divide community members rather than to

foster any kind of cooperation or joint problem solving among them.

This paper has explored community meetings as a tool for facilitating more constructive citizen participation in the community development process. Public hearings are usually a part of specific development in the community, and typically occur fairly late in the community development process. As they have been presented here, community meetings are a part of efforts to develop the community as a whole, and represent one of the first steps to be taken in those efforts. Community meetings are not a way in which public decision-makers give community members an opportunity to say "yes" or "no" to a certain community development proposal. They are a means by which citizens can come together and identify the problems themselves, express concerns, share ideas, gain information, and work as a group to solve local problems and plan for the community's future. Community meetings produce three important outcomes.

First, community meetings are an effective way of gathering information from citizens. If community development efforts are to reflect the needs and priorities of local residents, then there must be a way in which those needs and priorities can be assessed. Community meetings as a part of development of the community allow citizens to stop fighting about how to pay for the sewer system or where to put the new stop sign, and give them an opportunity to

express worries and share ideas regarding the community as a whole. If the meeting is designed to facilitate this kind of communication, it is possible that individuals will set aside their special interests for a time, and listen to one another in the interest of the common good of the community. The meetings provide useful information to local decision-makers and public administrators, and help make the citizens themselves aware of the concerns and unique perspectives of their fellow community members. Community meetings are also an effective means by which local government can provide information to the citizens.

A second result of community meetings is the involvement of citizens in the planning and implementation of community development efforts. As citizens participating in community meetings identify common goals, they can be encouraged to help in planning and implementing efforts to accomplish those goals. This has the practical benefit of generating valuable human resources. It is also likely that local citizens will have a greater trust in projects being organized and carried out by other community members. Additionally, as those involved in the community meeting go on to work on a specific community development project, they carry with them the information and concerns presented by fellow citizens during the meeting.

Finally, and most significantly, public participation generated through community development efforts has the

potential to increase local citizens' sense of community and build their trust in, and connection, to local government. Community meetings can facilitate these results by giving citizens an opportunity to work together with fellow community members and develop an understanding of others' concerns and views which might differ from their own. If provided with an open and non-judgmental setting, it is possible that community members can set aside differences and work together for the good of the entire community. By utilizing community meetings as a way to give citizens a legitimate voice in local decision-making, local leaders can empower citizens and allow them to make the government their own. Empowering citizens, in turn, allows them to take responsibility for the future well-being of their communities, and ultimately, for their own individual well-being.

Certainly, there are costs associated with increased public participation through community meetings. There will typically be some expense involved in organizing and conducting community meetings. This is particularly true if a consultant or outside expert is hired to manage the meeting. The more significant cost, although it is less easily measured, is the expenditure of time and energy necessary if local leaders are to be sincerely committed to facilitating and responding to public participation. Such commitment requires on-going efforts to provide

opportunities for citizen participation, as well as methods by which citizen input is considered and acted upon. It is one matter to give citizens a chance to voice their concerns. It is quite another to attempt to address, or at least consider, all of those concerns.

Citizen participation is not to be had without a price. There is also no guarantee that increased citizen participation through community meetings will result in widespread public support of local government or an end to conflict among special interests. It is apparent, however, that facilitating citizen participation in community development is not "optional." It is an inherent part of legitimate community development, and is vital to ensuring public support. Community meetings which facilitate citizen participation as a part of the overall development of the community thus serve two critical purposes. They enhance the well-being of the entire community by increasing cooperation and trust among the citizens and between the citizens and government. They give community members a voice in decisions about their community. This result not only benefits the community as a whole, but also leads to increased public support of more specific community development efforts. The citizen participation generated through community meetings sets off a continuous, productive process. A sense of community spririt, cooperation, and trust is first established. This leads to ideas and

increased public support for more narrowly focused community development efforts. These efforts improve the lives of community members, who in turn are empowered to become involved in future community development projects. Community meetings are only a part of this on-going cycle, but represent a valuable tool for putting the community into the community development process.

APPENDIX A - LETTER TO TROY CITIZENS

Northwest Community Consultants
Post Office Box 2727
Missoula, Montana 59806

April 12, 1993

Dear Troy Citizen,

You are invited to participate in a Troy Town Meeting on Friday, April 23, at the Senior Citizens Center in Troy. Sign-in will begin at 3:30 p.m. and the meeting will start at 4:00 p.m. A potluck dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. and the final portion of the meeting will take place after dinner.

The goal of this meeting is to have the citizens of Troy come together and identify the top things they want to see happen in Troy over the next ten years. Once those items have been identified, a plan of action to begin to accomplish each goal will be developed. Northwest Community Consultants of Missoula will be conducting the meeting on behalf of the Troy City Council.

You have been contacted because you are active within the community and have been recognized as an important link to other Troy residents. <u>This meeting is open to everyone in the community!</u> We are asking each person who receives this letter to attend the meeting themselves <u>and</u> we invite you to bring along at least three others -- your neighbors, your family, your co-workers, or your friends. This is a community event and its success depends upon full community participation.

We will need fifteen people to serve as meeting facilitators and are asking your help. The facilitators will assist in running the meeting and will need to attend a training on Thursday, April 22 from 7:00 to 8:00 p.m. at the Troy Power & Light Building. If you are interested in serving as a facilitator, please leave your name and phone number at Troy City Hall and plan on attending the Thursday night training.

APPENDIX A (continued)

I hope that you will take this opportunity to share your ideas and take part in planning Troy's future. Please post the enclosed flyer at your business, church, or other local spot. Please spread the word about the meeting. And most importantly, please join us on Friday, April 23.

Sincerely,

Patrick B. Edgar, President
Northwest Community Consultants
Telephone: 251-4229

APPENDIX B - MEETING NOTICE

What are the most important things that need to happen in Troy over the next ten years?

Express your views at the ...

TROY TOWN MEETING

WHEN:	*Friday, April 23, 1993 -- 3:30 p.m.*
WHAT:	* A Community Meeting Open to All * A Chance to Discuss and Plan Troy's Future
WHERE:	TROY SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER
POTLUCK DINNER:	6:00 p.m. -- Bring a Dish -- Drinks Provided
QUESTIONS?	Please contact Loretta Jones at 295-4278 or Sue Morris at 295-4253.

Troy is your community. Have a say in its future!

Meeting to be conducted by Northwest Community Consultants on behalf of the Troy City Council.

APPENDIX C - PRESS RELEASE

Northwest Community Consultants
Post Office Box 2727
Missoula, Montana 59806

PRESS RELEASE -- April 16, 1993

Contacts:

Councilwoman Loretta Jones
Troy City Council
406/295-4278

Leslie Reid, Consulting Assistant
Northwest Community Consultants
406/542-0663

Mayor Roger Kensler
Troy City Hall
406/295-4151

Dr. Patrick Edgar, President
Northwest Community Consultants
406/243-2721

Northwest Community Consultants, on behalf of the Troy City Council, is organizing a Troy Town Meeting that will be held on Friday, April 23, at the Troy Senior Citizens Center. Sign-in for the meeting will begin at 3:30 p.m. with the actual meeting beginning at 4:00 p.m. A potluck dinner will be served at 6:00 p.m. Participants are asked to bring a dish -- drinks will be provided.

The objective of the town meeting is to give Troy residents an opportunity to identify what they believe to be the most important things that need to happen in Troy over the next ten years. Participants are not required to live within Troy city limits, and all members of the Troy community are welcome and encouraged to attend the meeting.

Participants will work in small groups and as a whole to discuss and clarify the community's top concerns.

APPENDIX C (continued)

Discussion topics are not limited and will be determined by the participants themselves. The meeting is follow-up to a citizens' survey that was conducted in Troy last summer. Survey results and priorities identified during the town meeting will be used to plan community development activities to take place in Troy. At the conclusion of the town meeting, participants will be asked to form work groups to begin pursuing goals identified during the meeting.

APPENDIX D - AGENDA

DETAILED AGENDA
TROY TOWN MEETING - FRIDAY, APRIL 23, 1993
TROY SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER

** SET UP - SENIOR CITIZENS CENTER - 2:00 P.M.
* sign-in table/chairs at door
- name tags (Mark & Pat)
- markers -- black & colored (Mark & Pat)
- copies of survey results (Leslie)
- sign-in sheet & pens (Leslie)
- scratch paper & pencils (Leslie)

* chair set-up
- first for large group discussion
- plan for small group locations/chair set-up

* small group areas
- plan & set up with flip chart paper
- markers & tape at each area

* work area for compiling list w/ paper & pens

* main presentation area (podium? microphone?)
- post meeting agenda
- place to display group lists

** PRE-MEETING POW WOW
* review agenda & roles
* check materials
* issues/problems that might come up

I. Sign-in - 3:30 p.m.
* sign-in/pick-up name tags (Mark & local person)
* study Troy Community Survey results

II. Welcome & Opening Remarks - 4:00 p.m. - Mayor Kensler

III. Explanation of Meeting and Process - 4:10 p.m. - Pat Edgar
* purpose of a community meeting
* connection to survey process
* results to come out of meeting
* schedule for the day

APPENDIX D (continued)

IV. Explanation of Small Group Activity - 4:30 p.m. - Leslie Reid

* purpose - to generate information/get input
* process
    - break into groups by color
    - role of facilitator
    - brainstorming process (all ideas/no critique)
    - topics
    - items presented to whole group
    - questions??

V. Break into Small Groups - 4:45 p.m.

VI. Small Group Activity - 5:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

* brainstorm what you like best about Troy - 10 minutes
* goals for Troy in next 10 years - 30 minutes
* necessary resources - 10 minutes
* available resources - 10 minutes
* facilitators collect lists & bring to main area

VII. Dinner - 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. - On-site Potluck

* compile lists (Pat & Mark & Leslie)
* post lists
* double check w/ facilitators for accuracy
* Hand out stars??

VIII. Presentation of Group Lists - 7:00 p.m.

* explain how compiled (Mark)
* present list (Leslie)
* narrow down list (Pat)
    - items unacceptable (HOW TO DEAL W/ CONFLICT?)
    - items no one will defend
* presentation of final list
* Questions? Clarification?
* Hand out stars??

IX. Identification of Top Five Goals - 8:00 p.m.

* explain purpose (Leslie)
* explain process & stars (Mark)
* place stick 'em stars under your top five

APPENDIX D (continued)

XI. Present and Discuss Top Five Goals - 8:15 p.m.
* look at placement of stars/rank items accordingly
* explain five minute brainstorm on each top 5 goals
* address the following:
    - information/resources necessary
    - special concerns re: each goal
    - what needs to happen this year
* timekeeper move group along (Mark)
* recorder (Leslie)
* facilitator (Pat)

XII. Explanation of Work Groups - 8:50 p.m.
* role of work groups (Loretta? Pat?)
* ask people to commit (local person?)
* group to be contacted by follow-up person to set mtg.

X. Closing Remarks - 8:55 p.m. - Meeting Follow-up Person??
* Now what?!!
* Ask people to sign-up for work group/Pep talk!!
* sign-up sheets available (Mark) (Leslie to provide)
* ask participants to complete evaluation form (Leslie)

XII. Adjournment - 9:00 p.m.

** CLEAN UP/WHAT NEXT??

APPENDIX E - FACILITATORS' TRAINING OUTLINE

****

TROY TOWN MEETING
FACILITATORS' TRAINING

****

** Group Introductions -- Facilitators
- name & why you are here

** Introduction -- Leslie Reid, Northwest Community Consultants
- purpose of Troy Town Meeting
- review meeting agenda

** Role of Facilitators
- help participants feel comfortable
- conduct small group activity (brainstorming)
- to remain neutral/doesn't evaluate
- watch group members/provide help if necessary

** Brainstorming
- what it is and isn't
- all ideas are good ones
- potential problems
  - big mouths
  - criticism
  - no ideas
- recording process
- the timer
- brainstorm topics
  - * What do you like best about Troy?
  - * What are the most important things that need to happen in Troy over next ten years?
  - * What resources does Troy need to be a good community?
  - * What resources does Troy have to be a good community?

** Group Brainstorming

** Small Group Activity
- explain process & role of facilitators

** Compiling Lists
- how process will work
- facilitators to check for accuracy

** Discussion and Questions

APPENDIX F - EVALUATION

****

TROY TOWN MEETING

POST-MEETING EVALUATION

****

1. How did you hear about the meeting?

2. Why did you attend the meeting?

3. How did the meeting run (disorganized, on-time, boring, etc.)?

4. The best part about the meeting was:

5. The worst part about the meeting was:

6. What do you think should happen in Troy as a result of this meeting? What do you think <u>will</u> happen?

7. Do you feel that you had an opportunity to have your opinions heard at this meeting?

Other comments:

Thank you!

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